

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, May 21, 2013 at 5:00 p.m., in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Ed Koslowski, Delores Pierce, Duane Pierce, Jim Haskins, Carl Soderburg, John Walschinski, Joe Witkowski, Bill Kloiber, Jerry Polus, Bernie Erickson, Sherry Steenbock

****Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1428**

1. Call Meeting to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 5:00 p.m.

2. Invocation by Jim Haskins.

3. Approve/Modify Agenda.

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Delores Pierce to approve the agenda. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Approve/Modify Minutes of April 16, 2013.

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Duane Pierce to approve. Vote taken.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Brown County Fair – 2013 Veterans Appreciation Day Discussion (August 17).

CVSO Jerry Polus indicated that he invited Bill Kloiber, Chief of Staff for Green Bay to the meeting because the State Department of Veterans Affairs holds annual benefit expos and they wanted to schedule one for July in Green Bay. Polus called them and advised them that this Subcommittee was doing something similar at the Fair and he explained the event and it was determined that this would be a duplication of events. With the help of Bill Kloiber, Polus was able to convince the State VA to back off a little and let this Subcommittee do our program at the Fair but there will be representation from the State VA at the Fair. With the Subcommittee's permission, Polus has invited the City of Green Bay to partner with this Subcommittee and the Meet and Greet group to participate.

Polus also indicated that he has secured a band to play at the event. He was not able to get the US National Guard Band and the US Navy Band was also not able to attend. He was given the name of a group called Talk of the Town Dixieland Band who has agreed to perform at the event, however, there is a cost of \$80.00 per performer and there are six people in the band so the cost for the band will be \$480. Haskins has heard this band perform in the past and said that they are excellent. Polus indicated that the band will play a tribute to each branch of service and will also play other military music throughout the evening.

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Duane Pierce to approve the expenditure for the band for Veterans Appreciation Day at the Fair at a cost of \$480.00. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Polus continued that the providers that have been locked in for the event so far include the Federal VA Regional Office, VA Medical Center in Milwaukee, State VA, Vets Center and the Schneider Ride With Pride Truck will also be there. He indicated that they are getting a new truck in May and the new truck may be used at the Fair. Polus stated that he is waiting to hear back from the Veterans Home at King, Wisconsin to see if they would like to man a table. There will also be a table for Veterans Court.

Polus also showed the group a draft of the poster that has been created for the event. A discussion was held regarding the poster and it was decided to add something that door prizes will be given out as well as to make a notation on the poster that the free ticket does not include rides. A picture of the Vietnam Vets Honor Guard will also be incorporated onto the poster design. Polus hoped to have the posters mailed out in mid-June. A suggestion was also made that a notation be made on the poster that tickets need to be obtained in advance of the event and will not be available at the gate.

A discussion was also held with regard to a rifle squad and it was debated whether it would be a good idea to have rifle shots or not. It was decided to forego the rifle shots.

Polus also stated that he had a call in to see if we could get one of the Medal of Honor winners to attend the event. He will keep the Subcommittee updated on this.

Haskins indicated that he had received a call from Rachel at the Fair Board who had questions as to whether the stage would be set up on the tent or outside the tent. It was discussed that the stage would be set up outside of the tent and Erickson made a suggestion to angle the stage slightly so that people could watch from under the tent if they chose to be in the shade. Polus also stated that we will have to nail down the time of the band performance. Haskins said he will attend the next Fair Board meeting to go over these items with Rachel.

Polus concluded that the Committee will need to decide what they want to do in terms of a memento for the Vietnam Vets and we also need to lock in an emcee for the ceremony.

Ed Koslowski made a suggestion that with the tent being set up in a different location this year additional signage would be a good idea to direct veterans down there from the midway. Polus has the banner to display on the front of the tent, but it was agreed that signage on the midway would be helpful. Koslowski went over the agenda for the day as follows: booths will open at noon and then at 6:00 pm door prizes will be handed out, followed by posting of the colors, Rolling Thunder's table ceremony, Vietnam Vets will do a flag folding ceremony followed by Taps and then speakers such as Bernie Erickson and Troy Streckenbach and any other speakers. This will be followed by retirement of the colors and then the band's performance. He estimated the program to take 30 – 45 minutes. Once the timeline is finalized it will be communicated to the Fair Board so that they can include the information in their promotional materials.

Koslowski continued that there are some basic rules for the event and these include no fundraising in the tent by any group or organization, no politicians inside the tent and no military recruiters inside the tent.

Jim Haskins and Duane Pierce will handle distributing the door prizes. Erickson will try to gather some prizes from Stadium View and he will also see if he can get another charter fishing trip donated. Steenbock suggested that each member of the Subcommittee solicit door prizes from two businesses. Polus indicated that he will supply water bottles, tee shirts and coffee mugs for prizes as well. A discussion was

also held with regard to the possibility of getting an autographed football from Mark Murphy of the Packers and Erickson will follow up on this.

A discussion was also held with regard to a memento for the Vietnam Vets that will attend the ceremony. Pocket knives were discussed along with rubber bracelets. Erickson will look into the rubber bracelets and get a price and confer with Polus on this. Polus suggested that all of the Vietnam Vets be asked to rise during the program to be recognized and then come up on stage to be presented with the memento and shake hands with the County Executive and Chair Erickson.

6. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.

CVSO Jerry Polus stated that he had received a visit recently from Habitat for Humanity who is looking for a veteran family to build a home for. There would be certain criteria that would need to be met and Polus and his staff who have come up with several families that may be eligible, but he asked if anyone on the Subcommittee knew of a family who may qualify to let him know.

7. Report from Committee Members Present (Erickson, Desisles, Haskins, Maino, Ness, Pierce, Steenbock, Walschinski & Witkowski).

-Chair Erickson shared an article that he had clipped from the newspaper regarding Ben Edinger who died from injuries sustained in Iraq in 2004. He indicated that there is a new trail being built that will begin near the Boys and Girls Club on Oneida Street that will stretch out past Military Avenue and the majority of this trail will be named The Ben Edinger Trail. Erickson wrote a letter to the Edinger family that he would like interested Subcommittee members to sign. Several of the members signed the letter that will be sent to the Edinger family.

-Jim Haskins shared a flyer from Walmart that indicated that the retail giant has pledged to hire any honorably discharged returning military veterans that has a job with the company within the first 12 months off of active duty and meet Walmart's criteria. Haskins also stated that he had read an article that AT & T plans to hire additional veterans and has a goal of hiring 5,000 veterans over the next five years. He concluded his report by stating that under the Sears Heroes at Home Campaign a large number of Sears associates participated in Operation Support or Troops by assuming care packages for service members deployed in Afghanistan. Over the past five years Sears has raised more than \$33 million dollars to aid 110,000+ military families and in partnership with Rebuilding Together has built 1365+ homes for wounded veterans.

-Duane Pierce reported that he had received notification earlier in the day that the House has passed a new version of the Stolen Valor Act. This bill would make it a crime to lie about receiving honors from the military service. This was brought before the House by a representative of Nevada and the legislations seeks to prosecute people who falsely claim to have received a Purple Heart or any other military decoration when applying for anything of value such as government benefits, a contract or a job reserved for a veteran. Violators could now be fined and face up to a year in jail.

Pierce also stated that on Monday, May 27 the Vietnam Vets will be doing a ceremony behind the Neville Public Museum at the memorial and they will then participate in the Memorial Day Parade in De Pere. There will also be a Legion ceremony at Heritage Hill at 10:00 a.m. At 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 27 the Patriotic Society will have their annual Memorial Day ceremony at the Admiral Flatley Park by the river. He urged everyone to attend these events.

-Sherry Steenbock indicated that one new certificate had been sent out. She also stated that with regard to the State Senate Bill for Veterans Day off with pay, she received a response from both Robert Cowles and Chad Weininger. She read the letter she received from Weininger to the group which essentially said that he planned to vote in favor of the bill when it comes to the floor for vote and she stated that the letter she received from Cowles was similar. She has e mailed the executive assistant in Weininger's office to ask for an update but not has heard yet, but she will continue to keep this Subcommittee updated.

-John Walschinski stated that he will try to get the 3-D model of the Veterans memorial being built in Howard for the Fair so that people can view the same. They are currently working with a professional fundraiser for the project and he will continue to keep the Subcommittee advised of the progress of this memorial.

-Joe Witkowski shared an ad he had seen in Auto Aces that indicates they were having a special on oil changes, tire rotations and balance for Veterans Day. He also had an article from the paper that indicated there were some issues with the Veterans Court and that that program was in jeopardy, however, Jerry Polus made it very clear that that was not in relation to the Court in Brown County and the Brown County Veterans Court is doing very, very well and currently has about 20 participants. Witkowski also shared a picture he had cut from the paper of a group of WWI Veterans group that was formed in 1916. Witkowski completed his report by sharing an article he had cut from the paper regarding the new VA Clinic and indicated that he was happy to see the clinic progressing and was looking forward to receiving services there upon its completion.

8. Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law.

Duane Pierce stated that there is now a POW/MIA chair cover for these meetings and he will bring it to each meeting for display. He also reported that one of Wisconsin's missing soldiers had been found in Vietnam and his remains will be brought home and buried later this month.

9. Adjourn.

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Sherry Steenbock to adjourn at 6:07 p.m. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Recording Secretary